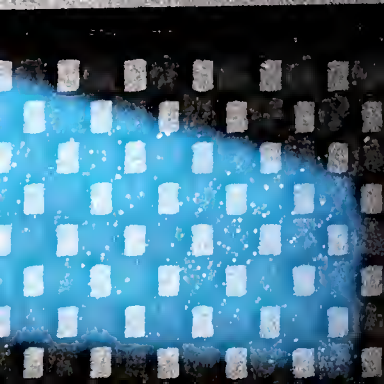

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News Releases and other News Material

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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, Office Of Communications, Room 556-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5881.

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News Releases-

Release No. 0421.94
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789

CCC INTEREST RATE FOR JUNE 5-1/4 PERCENT

WASHINGTON, June 1--Commodity loans disbursed in June by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 5-1/4 percent interest rate, according to Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of the CCC.

The 5-1/4 percent is up from May's 4-5/8 percent and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury.

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Release No. 0422.94
Robert Feist (202) 720-6789

USDA ANNOUNCES 1995 WHEAT PROVISIONS

WASHINGTON, June 1--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced a zero-percent acreage reduction program (ARP) for the 1995 wheat crop. This level was chosen from the statutory range of 0 to 15 percent and is unchanged from 1994.

"A zero-percent ARP continues to be the best choice for producers and consumers of U.S. wheat because it provides the highest income for producers, the greatest economic activity for rural communities, and the most high quality grain for processors," Espy said.

Espy said maintaining a zero-percent ARP for the third year in a row also underlines a serious commitment to the world wheat market. "We will continue to use the Export Enhancement Program and all other export promotion programs to remain competitive. Let there be no doubt that the U.S. will continue to be a reliable supplier of wheat to both our domestic and foreign consumers," he said.

Espy also announced two other provisions for the 1995 wheat program;

--The established "target" price is $4.00 per bushel, unchanged from 1994.

--A paid land diversion will not be implemented.

--Other provisions will be announced at a later date.

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Release No. 0423.94
Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

USDA AMENDS BAN ON ANIMAL CASINGS FROM CERTAIN COUNTRIES

WASHINGTON, June 2--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has amended its regulations prohibiting importation of certain animal casings from countries where either bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or African swine fever exists.

On Sept. 7, 1993, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service placed a ban on importation of ruminant casings from countries affected by BSE and a ban on swine casings from countries affected by African swine fever. Animal casings are intestines, stomachs, esophagi and urinary bladders that are used to encase processed meats, such as sausages.

USDA received several comments on this interim rule from foreign governments and commissions, trade associations and a U.S. veterinary medical association.

After careful consideration of all comments received, USDA will now prohibit only bovine casings--not casings from all ruminant species--from countries where BSE exists.

Among ruminants, BSE appears to affect bovines, and no scientific evidence currently shows that BSE is transmissible from cattle to other species. USDA's list of countries considered to be affected by BSE includes Great Britain, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland, Oman, the Falkland Islands and France. USDA's amendment permits importation of sheep casings that originate or are processed in these countries.

To prevent either African swine fever or BSE from being introduced into the United States, USDA prohibits or restricts importation of animal products and byproducts that originate from countries where these two diseases exist. Materials from these countries have a higher probability of containing the agents that cause these diseases. If these materials were imported and were fed to U.S. cattle or swine populations, the diseases could become established in this country, causing great economic loss for U.S. livestock industries.

This final rule was published in the May 31 Federal Register and is effective upon publication.

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Release No. 0424.94
Cynthia A. Eck (301) 436-5931
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

USDA DETERMINES SOYBEAN LINE SAFE FOR DEREGULATION

WASHINGTON, June 2--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has ruled it will no longer regulate a genetically engineered glyphosate-tolerant soybean line or its descendants.

"We have determined that this soybean line does not present a plant pest risk," said John Payne, acting director of biotechnology, biologics and environmental protection for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

In December 1993, USDA requested public comment on a petition from Monsanto Co., St. Louis, Mo., for a determination of nonregulatory status of the soybean line.

USDA received 33 comments from farm cooperatives, farmers, a food company, national and state soybean associations, a science and technology policy organization, seed companies and affiliated research organizations, a state agricultural commodity commission for soybeans, state departments of agriculture, universities and a university experiment station. With a single exception, the comments were favorable to the petition.

The soybean line, known as glyphosate-tolerant soybean line 40-3-2, or GTS 40-3-2, contains gene sequences derived from plant pathogens. The GTS line 40-3-2 has been described as soybeans that have been modified to tolerate the herbicide glyphosate.

Information was submitted on field trials of the soybean line from 1991 to the present. USDA reviewers analyzed and inspected each of these field trials and uncovered no plant pest risk before, during or after the trials.

Payne said that National Environmental Policy Act regulations and guidelines were used to assess potential environmental impact of this determination. Payne added that USDA regulators prepared an environmental assessment and subsequently reach a finding of no significant impact.

The determination became effective on May 18 and was published in the Federal Register on May 24.

For further information contact Shirley P. Ingebritsen, Regulatory Analyst, BBEP, APHIS, USDA, Room 850 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782, (301) 436-7601. A copy of the determination or the environmental assessment may be obtained by contacting Kay Peterson at the same telephone number.

A record of the determination, the Monsanto submission and written comments may be viewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing access to this room are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817.

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Release No. 0425.94
Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

REPORT ON QUALITY OF U.S. GRAIN EXPORTS NOW AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON, June 2--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has released its latest report on the quality of U.S. grain exports.

Published annually by USDA's Federal Grain Inspection Service, "1993 U.S. Grain Exports: Quality Report" summarizes the quality of export wheat, corn, soybeans, sorghum, barley, sunflower seeds, oats, canola, and mixed grain. It is based on data collected during the official inspection of export grain shipments in calendar year 1993.

According to FGIS Acting Administrator David Shipman, the report reflects FGIS's continuing commitment to aggregating and providing important grain quality information.

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Release No. 0426.94
Cynthia A. Eck (301) 436-5931
Jerry Redding (202) 720-6959

USDA TO HOLD MEETING ON ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR ZW-20 SQUASH

WASHINGTON, June 2--The U.S. Department of Agriculture has scheduled a public meeting here on June 21 to discuss the environmental assessment of a genetically engineered virus-resistant squash line known as "ZW-20 squash."

"The preliminary finding of no significant impact indicates that ZW-20 squash, and its descendants, do not present a plant pest risk," said John Payne, acting director of biotechnology, biologics and environmental protection in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Over the past five years, USDA has evaluated the squash in laboratory, greenhouse and field experiments to confirm that it exhibits the desired agronomic characteristics and does not pose a plant pest risk.

In July 1992, the Asgrow Seed Company, a subsidiary of the Upjohn Company based in Kalamazoo, Mich., and developer of the bioengineered squash, petitioned USDA requesting that the squash no longer be considered a regulated article.

While considering the petition to deregulate the squash, USDA twice requested comments from the public. The first comment period identified two main issues, which were further discussed in the second comment period. They were (1) whether the squash plants might lead to the emergence of novel plant viruses and (2) whether a new weed pest might be created through pollen transmission of the virus resistance trait from ZW-20 squash to free-living wild relatives of squash.

In addition, USDA contracted with Dr. Hugh Wilson of Texas A&M University to prepare an extensive report on the range of issues relating to the association between free-living and domesticated populations of squash, including the ZW-20 variety.

To ensure that all views on scientific issues are fully reviewed, and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, USDA will hold the public meeting on June 21, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m., in the Jefferson Auditorium, USDA, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue S.W., Washington, D.C. Pre-meeting registration will begin at 8 a.m., and registrants will be heard in order of their registration.

Attendees who do not register in advance will be allowed to speak after all scheduled speakers have been heard. Anyone reading a statement must provide two copies to the presiding officer at the meeting. The officer may limit the time for each presentation in order to allow everyone wishing to speak the opportunity to be heard.

Notice of the public meeting to discuss the environmental assessment was published in the May 23 Federal Register.

For further information contact James White, Biotechnology Permits, BBEP, APHIS, USDA, Room 850 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782, (301) 436-7612. A copy of the environmental assessment and preliminary finding of no significant impact can be obtained from Kay Peterson, at the same address or (301) 436-7601.

The environmental assessment, preliminary finding of no significant impact, petition submitted by the Asgrow Seed Company, and public comments, can be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141 South Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., or at USDA, Suite 7 (first floor) Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to review these documents are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817.

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Release No. 0429.94
Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206
Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2032

USDA ANNOUNCES PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF 1994 PROGRAM SIGNUP

WASHINGTON, June 3--The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today that producers have signed agreements of intentions to participate in the Commodity Credit Corporation 1994 price support and production adjustment programs which resulted in 175.2 million acres of wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland and extra-long staple (ELS) cotton, and rice.

Under the agreements, 1.5 million acres were designated as Acreage Conservation Reserve. Also, 10.6 million acres are intended to be idled under the 0,50/85-92 provisions; 1.3 million acres are intended to be planted to minor oilseeds under the 0/85-92 provisions (wheat and feed grain bases only); and 13,883 acres of industrial and other crops are intended to be planted under the 0,50/85-92 provisions.

The acreage enrolled in 1994 commodity programs represents 83.2 percent of the 210.6 million acres of total crop acreage bases established for these commodities. In 1993, 83.4 percent of total crop acreage bases were in compliance with program requirements.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF THE PRELIMINARY 1994 ENROLLMENT REPORT

Crop	Effective Base	Enrolled Base	Percent Enrolled	ACR 1/	0,50/85-92 Idled	0,50/85-92 Pltd to Minor Oilseeds	0,50/85-92 Pltd to Indust/ Other Crops	Total
	--million acres--		-%-	------------million acres---------				
Corn	81.6	66.9	81.9	0.0	2.0	0.2	0.002	2.2
Sorghum	13.5	11.0	81.4	0.0	1.5	0.03	0.001	1.5
Barley	10.7	9.0	84.3	0.0	1.9	0.4	0.001	2.4
Oats	6.8	2.8	41.4	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.001	0.6
Feed Grains	112.7	89.7	79.6	0.0	5.9	0.8	0.005	6.7
Wheat	78.2	68.0	86.9	0.0	4.2	0.5	0.005	4.7
Upl. Cotton	15.3	13.6	88.6	1.5	0.2	N/A	0.004	0.2
ELS Cotton	0.2	0.1	47.5	0.01	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rice	4.2	3.9	94.0	0.0	0.2	N/A	0.0001	0.2
Total	210.6	175.2	83.2	1.5	10.6	1.3	0.014	11.9

NOTE: Totals may not add due to rounding.
1/ Acreage Conservation Reserve.
N/A = Not Applicable.

Producers participating in the 1994 commodity programs agreed to reduce their plantings from the established crop acreage bases by at least 11 percent for upland cotton and 15 percent for ELS cotton. Acreage reductions were not required for wheat, corn, sorghum, barley, oats and rice.

Producers have the option to plant permitted crops, other than the program crop, on not to exceed 25 percent of any eligible program crop acreage base without having a reduction in the size of the base. This acreage is known as "flex acreage". Flex acreage is composed of "normal flex acreage" (NFA), which equals 15 percent of a crop acreage base, and "optional flex acreage" (OFA), which equals 10 percent of a crop acreage base.

Producers indicated intentions to plant 3.3 million acres of "flex acreage" to soybeans, 299,472 acres to minor oilseeds, and 467,572 acres to other nonprogram crops.

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY 1994 FLEXIBLE ACREAGE

Crop	Soybeans	Minor Oilseeds	Other Non-program Crops	Total
	-----------million acres-----------			
Corn	2.279	0.044	0.124	2.447
Sorghum	0.179	0.006	0.016	0.200
Barley	0.048	0.062	0.045	0.156
Oats	0.032	0.010	0.013	0.055
Feed Grains	2.538	0.122	0.198	2.859
Wheat	0.613	0.168	0.240	1.021
Upland Cotton	0.028	0.002	0.013	0.043
Rice	0.144	0.007	0.017	0.168
Total	3.323	0.299	0.468	4.090

NOTE: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Producers participating in the 1994 Commodity Price Support and Production Adjustment Programs are eligible for other program benefits such as price support loans and deficiency payments. Producers who signed agreements of intentions to participate had the option of requesting that 50 percent of their projected deficiency payments be paid in advance for the 1994 crops of wheat, feed grains, upland and ELS cotton and rice.

Signup for the 1994 programs began on March 1 and ended April 29. Producers who signed agreements of intentions to participate are allowed to withdraw that crop from participation until the final certification date established for each enrolled crop without being assessed liquidated damages.

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Program Announcement-

Release No. 0427.94
Janise Zygmont (202) 720-6734

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, June 2--Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price or AWP), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (leaf grade 4, micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, June 9. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 3 through midnight Thursday, June 9.

This period represents Week 3 of the 6-week transition period from using current shipment prices to using forward shipment prices in the AWP calculation. The procedure was adopted to avoid a dramatic change in the AWP that could occur with no transition period due to differences between new and old crop price quotations. This procedure is also used to calculate the U.S. Northern Europe (USNE) price for the purpose of determining the maximum allowable adjustment to the AWP under the Step 1 provision. For Weeks 3 and 4, the Northern Europe (NE) price = [NE current price + NE forward price]/2. The USNE price = [USNE current price + USNE forward price]/2.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. Because this week's calculated AWP is equal to 135 percent of the 1993 upland cotton base quality loan rate, a further adjustment cannot be made.

Because both current and forward NE coarse count prices are not yet available, the CCA is calculated using the NE current price and the only NE coarse count price available.

This week's AWP and CCA are determined as follows:

<u>Adjusted World Price</u>			
NE Price		84.64	
Adjustments:			
Avg. U.S. spot market location	11.91		
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.50		
Avg. U.S. location	0.31		
Sum of Adjustments		- 13.72	
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE		70.92	cents/lb.
<u>Coarse Count Adjustment</u>			
NE Price Current Price......................		86.63	
NE Coarse Count Price		- 84.67	
		1.96	
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton		- 3.20	
		- 1.24	
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT		0	cents/lb.

Because the AWP is above 52.35 cents per pound--the base quality loan rate for both the 1992 and 1993 marketing years--the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the loan rate, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

This week marks the third week of the 3-week spring transition period during which consecutive 4-week Friday-through-Thursday periods contain a combination of NE price quotations only for 1 to 3 weeks and both NE current prices and NE forward prices only for 1 to 3 weeks. During this spring transition period, the user marketing certificate payment rate is based on the difference in the fourth week between the USNE current price and the NE current price, minus 1.25 cents. The payment is applicable during the Friday-through-Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30.

The USNE price has exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks, but not all of the previous four AWP's have been less than 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is zero. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	AWP (Announced) As Percent of Loan Rate	USNE Price	NE Price	User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate
			.....	cents/lb	.....
1	May 12, 1994	137.4	88.90	85.65	0
2	May 19, 1994	134.6	88.30 (c)	85.65 (c)	0
3	May 26, 1994	136.5	91.05 (c)	86.72 (c)	0
4	June 2, 1994	135.5	90.38 (c)	86.63 (c)	0

(c) Based on current price quotations.

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, June 9 at 5 p.m.

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